AVON
TALES OF FANTASY AND SUSPENSE!
10c
No.9
EERIE
HANDS of DEATH
PHANTOM HITCH-HIKER
HAUNTED MELODY
DEATH on SKIIS

EERIE

HIS EVIL HANDS PLAYED MUSIC WHENEVER ERIK DULAN PICKED UP HIS VIOLIN! HE WAS PROUD OF THE NEW HANDS WHICH BLACK MAGIC HAD SUPPLIED HIM--
--BUT HE HAD AN OVERWHELMING URGE TO STRANGLE! FOR HIS WERE... "THE HANDS OF DEATH!"
WIERDLY, EERILY THE SOUND OF CHOPIN'S RAINDROP PRELUDE FLOATED THROUGH FREDERIC PARKER'S STUDIO. AND WITH THE MUSIC CAME THE SPIRIT OF A BEAUTIFUL GIRL! SHE WAS MYSTERIOUSLY LOVELY, AND SHE CAME ONLY WHEN HE PLAYED... "THE HAUNTED MELODY!"
GLIDING HORRIBLY OVER THE SNOWY BAVARIAN ALPS, THE TERRIFYING APPARATION OF A SKIING SKELETON MADE THE BLOOD OF THE GERMAN PEASANTS GO ICY WITH FEAR! THE YOUNG FOREIGNER SCOFFED AT THE SUPERSTITIOUS MOUNTAINEERS. BUT HE DISCOVERED THAT... "DEATH WORE SKIIS!"
JOHN MORLEY MURDERED AN INNOCENT GIRL! HE SENT HER TO HER DEATH IN A SPEEDING CAR...AND NOW WHENEVER HE DRIVES AT NIGHT A GHASTLY SPECTRE AWAITS HIM BEYOND EACH NEW CURVE IN THE ROAD! "THE PHANTOM HITCH-HIKER!"
GEORGE EVANS KINSTLER 1952

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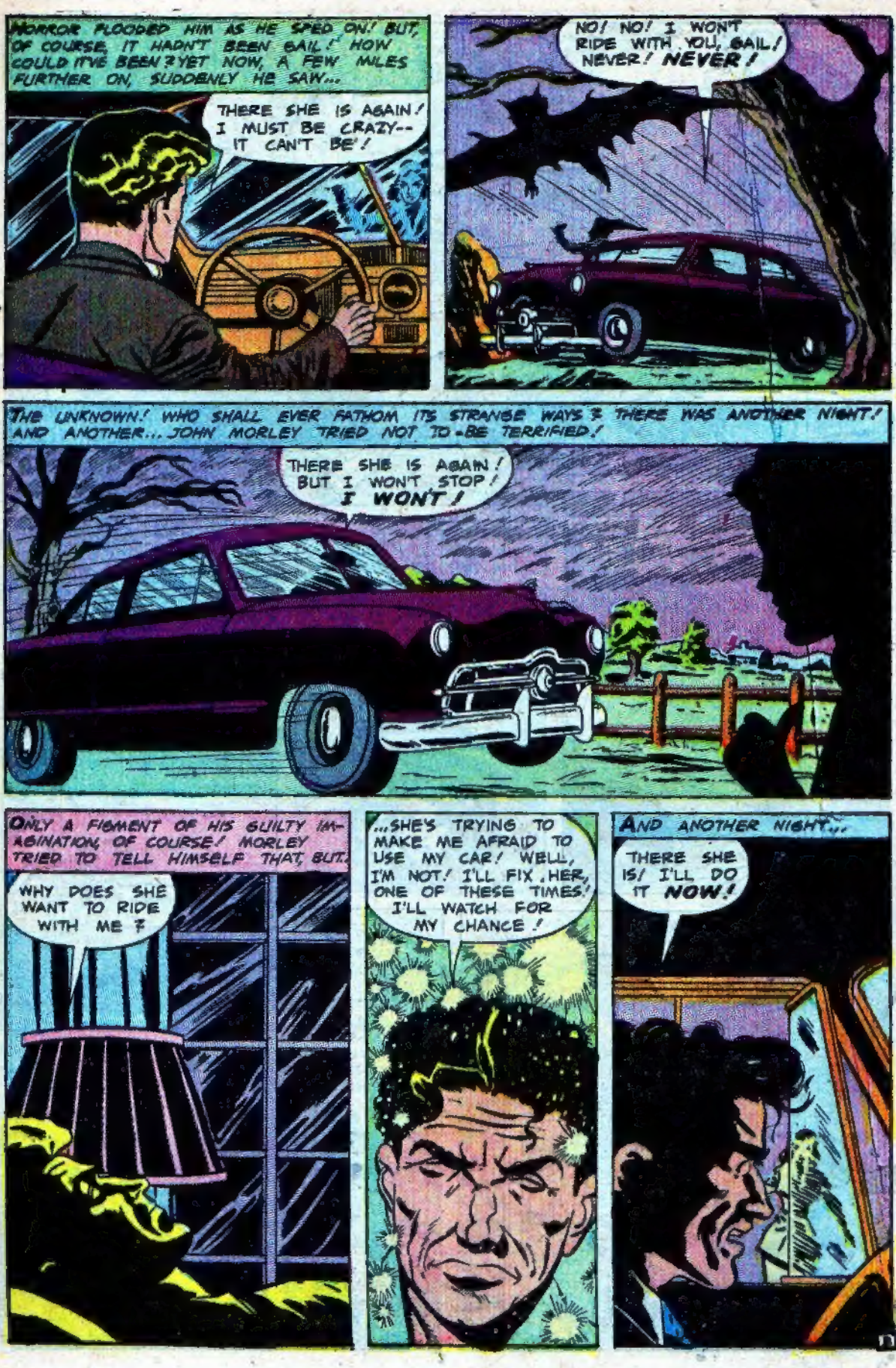
the PHANTOM HITCH-HIKER

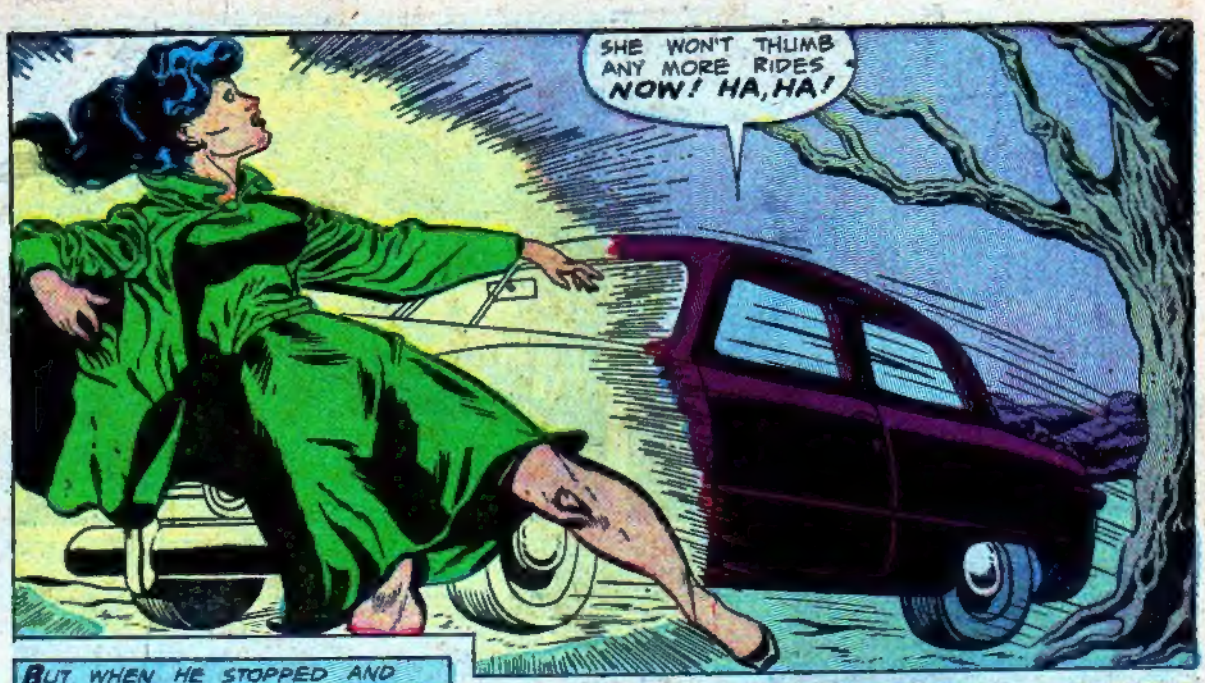
THE AUTOMOBILE IS A GOOD WEAPON WITH WHICH TO KILL! JOHN MORLEY FOUND IT SO WHEN HE MURDERED BEAUTIFUL GAIL GORDON AND MADE IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT! BUT YOU CAN'T FOOL THE STRANGE FORCES OF THE UNKNOWN! GRIM JUSTICE WAS METED OUT TO JOHN MORLEY, WHEN HE ENCOUNTERED... THE PHANTOM HITCH-HIKER!

AT TWENTY-TWO, GAIL GORDON WAS LEGAL MISTRESS OF HER FATHER'S ESTATE. SHE HAD LET JOHN MORLEY, HER GUARDIAN, CONTROL IT FROM THE TIME SHE HAD INHERITED IT, BECAUSE SHE WAS ABSORBED WITH HER MUSICAL CAREER--BUT, NOW...

JOHN, I'M PLANNING TO CONTINUE MY STUDIES IN EUROPE FOR SEVERAL YEARS! I'VE NEVER ASKED YOU ABOUT MY FINANCES, BUT NOW--
GOING TO EUROPE! WHY, GAIL--
I CAN'T LET HER!--SHE'LL FIND OUT!

MORLEY HAD, THROUGH THE YEARS, STOLEN MOST OF HER MONEY!
WE'LL STRAIGHTEN THINGS OUT TOMORROW! WE'LL GET AN AUDITOR TO CHECK EVERYTHING!
YOU'RE GOING MUCH FARTHER THAN EUROPE, MY DEAR GIRL!
ER, YES, GAIL!
SHE DID NOT NOTICE THAT HE HAD UNLOCKED THE CAR DOOR BESIDE HIM--AND AS THEY SPED ONTO THE BRIDGE...
SURE! YOU'RE GOIN' ON A TRIP, ALL RIGHT! A LONG JOURNEY! HA, HA!
JOHN! JOHN!
THE CAR SWERVED VIOLENTLY AS MORLEY LEAPED OUT!
GOODBYE, GAIL! HA, HA!
AA!EEE!!
CRASH!
NO ONE KNEW THAT JOHN MORLY WAS DRIVING WITH GAIL THAT NIGHT. HER BODY WAS FOUND AT THE WHEEL OF HER CAR, DEEP IN THE GORGE!
NO, ONE WILL EVER KNOW!
NO ONE IN THE WORLD!--BUT BEYOND THE BORDER--IN THAT MYSTERIOUS REALM WE CALL THE UNKNOWN--WHAT JOHN MORLEY HAD DONE WAS NO SECRET!..AND ABOUT A WEEK LATER,
BEAUTIFUL NIGHT FOR A DRIVE!...
MORLEY NEVER STOPPED FOR HITCH-HIKERS, BUT THE TRIM FIGURE OF THIS GIRL AS SHE STOOD THUMBING A RIDE WAS INTERESTING, AND...
I'LL PICK HER UP!..DON'T MIND A COMPANION LIKE HER ON THIS NICE MOONLIT NIGHT!
HE SLAMMED ON HIS BRAKES AND...
TAKE ME ALONG A FEW MILES, MISTER?
GAIL! NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE!


HORROR FLOODED HIM AS HE SPED ON! BUT, OF COURSE, IT HADN'T BEEN GAIL! HOW COULD IT'VE BEEN? YET NOW, A FEW MILES FURTHER ON, SUDDENLY HE SAW...
THERE SHE IS AGAIN! I MUST BE CRAZY-- IT CAN'T BE!
NO! NO! I WON'T RIDE WITH YOU, GAIL! NEVER! NEVER!
THE UNKNOWN! WHO SHALL EVER FATHOM ITS STRANGE WAYS? THERE WAS ANOTHER NIGHT! AND ANOTHER... JOHN MORLEY TRIED NOT TO BE TERRIFIED!
THERE SHE IS AGAIN! BUT I WON'T STOP! I WON'T!
ONLY A FIGMENT OF HIS GUILTY IMAGINATION, OF COURSE! MORLEY TRIED TO TELL HIMSELF THAT, BUT:
WHY DOES SHE WANT TO RIDE WITH ME?
...SHE'S TRYING TO MAKE ME AFRAID TO USE MY CAR! WELL, I'M NOT! I'LL FIX HER, ONE OF THESE TIMES! I'LL WATCH FOR MY CHANCE!
AND ANOTHER NIGHT...
THERE SHE IS! I'LL DO IT NOW!


SHE WON'T THUMB ANY MORE RIDES NOW! HA,HA!

BUT WHEN HE STOPPED AND RAN BACK...
HER BODY ISN'T HERE! WHA--?

UTTER HORROR FLOODED MORLEY! ALL HE COULD THINK OF WAS THAT HE MUST SPEED HOME! AS HE STARTED...
...THERE SHE IS! DID I DREAM I RAN OVER HER! I-- I MUST GET HOME! I'LL NEVER DRIVE A CAR AGAIN!

A STORM WAS COMING UP! MORLEY DROVE FRANTICALLY, BUT AT A CROSSROAD, A TRAFFIC LIGHT STOPPED HIM! AND AS HIS CAR STOOD THERE, SUDDENLY...
RIDE ME ALONG A FEW MILES, MISTER?
WHA--?

MORLEY HAD NO CHANCE TO DO ANYTHING BUT DRIVE ON! TRAFFIC WAS CROWDING HIM, AND...
HEY! GET GOING!
FOOD
HONK! HONK!

AND AS JOHN MORLEY SPED FORWARD INTO THE STORMY NIGHT...
SO HERE WE ARE AGAIN, JOHN! RIDING TOGETHER! HOW NICE!
GET OUT OF THE CAR! YOU-- YOU GHASTLY THING!

NOW MORLEY REALIZED THAT HE WAS SPEEDING OUT ONTO THE CANYON BRIDGE, AND...
AFRAID TO DRIVE, JOHN? WELL, IF YOU'RE NERVOUS, LET ME STEER! I'M NOT AFRAID! NOT AFRAID OF ANYTHING--NOW!
NO! NO! HELP! HELP!
YOU HELPED ME STEER ONCE, REMEMBER?
STOP! STOP!
YOU LAUGHED LAST TIME! HA, HA! REMEMBER?
HELP! HELP!
GOODBYE, JOHN! HA,HA,HA,HA!
AAIIIEEEEE!
THEN, FAR DOWN IN THE GORGE... JUST SILENT WRECKAGE...
AND LATER;..
HE'S DEAD!
GOOD THING HE WAS ALONE! NOBODY COULD LIVE THROUGH A CRASH LIKE THAT!
JUST ANOTHER UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT AT RED GORGE!
END

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12
12

The HANDS of DEATH!

LIFE WAS WORTHLESS TO ERIK DULAN WITHOUT A PERFECT PAIR OF HANDS
WHEN HE FOUND THEM IT WAS LIKE BEING BROUGHT BACK TO THE LAND OF THE LIVING AFTER KNOWING THE DANK CHILL OF THE LONESOME GRAVE! BUT DULAN DIDN'T KNOW THAT WHAT HE CHERISHED WERE... THE HANDS OF DEATH!
NODEL ALASCIA
ERIK DULAN, WORLD FAMOUS VIOLINIST, WAS PLUNGED INTO DESPAIR AFTER AN ACCIDENT WHICH LEFT HIS HANDS MANGLED AND TWISTED!
I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO PLAY AGAIN! LOOK AT THESE HANDS... SCARRED AND MISSHAPEN ...LIFELESS LUMPS OF SLOW MOVING FLESH!
I'D GIVE ANYTHING-- MY LIFE--FOR A NEW PAIR OF HANDS!

HE WENT FROM DOCTOR TO DOCTOR...AND ALWAYS IT WAS THE SAME STORY...
CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING TO LOOSEN THE MUSCLES... MAKE MY FINGERS REALLY ALIVE ONCE AGAIN?
SORRY, DULAN! THERE'S NOTHING MEDICAL SCIENCE CAN DO FOR YOU!
THEN ONE NIGHT HE HAPPENED TO OVERHEAR A WHISPERED NAME. IT STRUCK AN ECHO IN HIS MEMORY, AND...
HIS NAME IS NECROS! DR. NECROS. THEY SAY HE CAN DO ANYTHING... EVEN BRING THE DEAD BACK TO LIFE!
NECROS! I REMEMBER THAT NAME! A PRACTITIONER OF THE ANCIENT ART OF BLACK MAGIC!
I'VE TRIED EVERTHING ELSE... WHY NOT BLACK MAGIC? I'D GLADLY TRADE MY SOUL TO MAKE THESE HANDS NEW!
EAGERLY, DULAN SOUGHT NECROS' ADDRESS IN THE CITY PHONE BOOK, BUT...
NECRUMOS... NECTER... IT ISN'T HERE!
AND THEN...
THAT'S STRANGE. I'D SWEAR IT WASN'T THERE A MOMENT AGO! CAN HE KNOW ALREADY THAT I'M SEEKING HIM!? I'LL GO THERE AT ONCE!
DR. NECROS
1 WISTERIA DR.
ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY, GLEAMING DULLY IN THE MOONLIGHT LIKE THE BLEACHED BONES OF THE DROWNED, STOOD THE WALLS OF NECROS' ISOLATED MANSION...
THERE'S SOMETHING FRIGHTENING ABOUT THIS PLACE, AND YET I MUST ENTER!
2

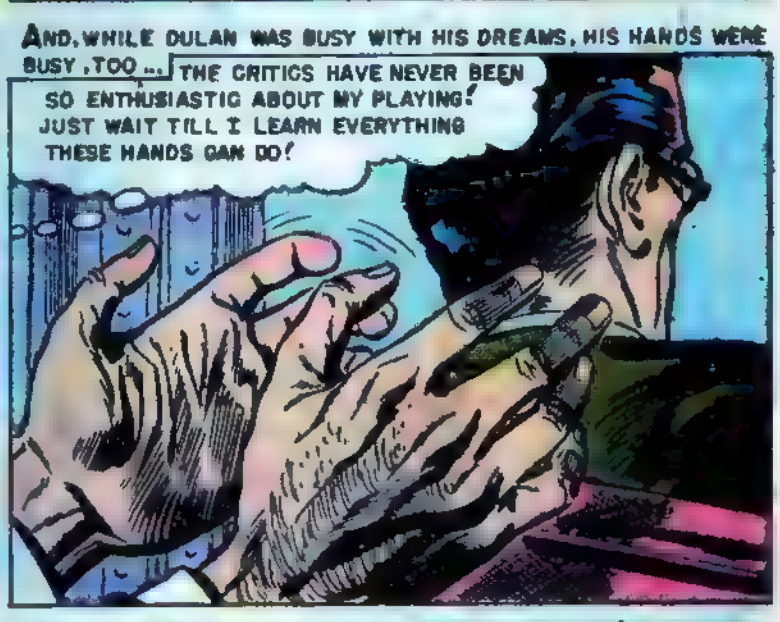
DULAN'S FEAR TURNED TO TERROR WHEN HE SAW NECROS FACE TO FACE!
I CAN GIVE YOU WHAT YOU WANT...BUT ARE YOU PREPARED TO PAY THE PRICE?
YES! YES! I'LL PAY ANYTHING!
THE PRICE IS NOT ANYTHING... IT IS EVERYTHING! DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
WHATEVER IT IS, I'LL PAY IT...ONLY, FIX MY HANDS!
I'M NOT GOING TO FIX YOUR HANDS... I'M GOING TO GIVE YOU NEW ONES! YOU WILL CHOOSE THEM YOURSELF!
HE MUST BE MAD...AND YET... HE SEEMS SO SURE OF HIMSELF! WHAT HAVE I TO LOSE?
SUDDENLY, WORDS CRACKLED FROM NECROS' LIPS, AND THE ROOM FILLED WITH A WRITHING CLOUD OF MIST, LADEN WITH THE ROTTEN STENCH OF DEATH!
IT MUST BE MY IMAGINATION... AND YET I'M SURE I SEE STRANGE SHAPES AND FORMS IN THAT UNEARTHLY MIST!
SWIFTLY THE VAGUE SHAPES MATERIALIZED FROM THE REEKING FOG, AND...
THERE! CHOOSE YOUR HANDS! WHICHEVER ONES YOU WANT WILL BE YOURS!
3

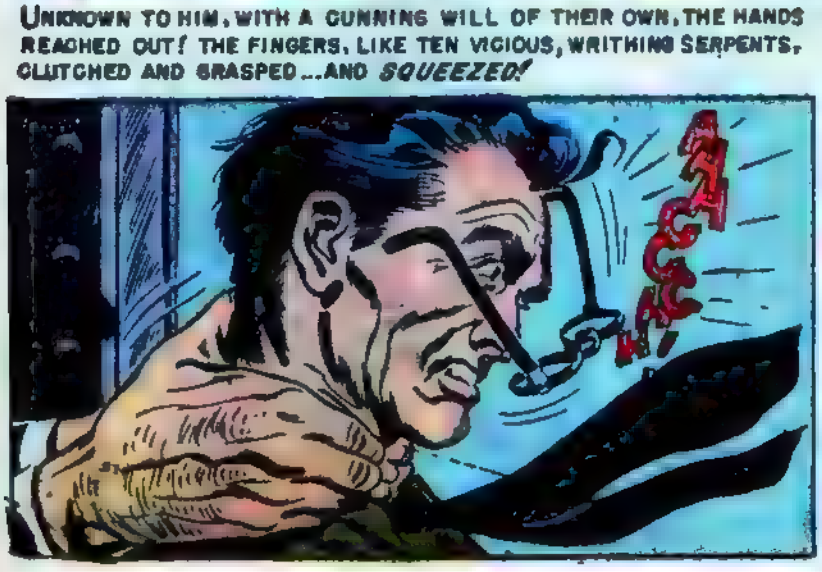
AS THOUGH IN A DAZE, DULAN INSPECTED THE FIRST HORRIBLE PAIR OF OUTSTRETCHED HANDS!
NO..NOT THESE...THE FINGERS ARE TOO NARROW...NOT STRONG ENOUGH!
AND THESE ARE TOO MUSCULAR... TOO BLUNT..NOT ENOUGH DELICACY OF MOVEMENT!
AAAH...THESE ARE JUST WHAT I WOULD WANT...STRONG HANDS, AND YET, THE FINGERS ARE LITHE, CAPABLE OF QUICK MOVEMENT!
THEY WILL BE YOURS! CLOSE YOUR EYES, AND GRASP THEM WITH YOUR OWN HANDS...FIRMLY....
AND WHEN DULAN OPENED HIS EYES...
THE HANDS! THEY...THEY'RE MINE, NOW! WHERE ARE THE--THE MEN THAT WERE HERE A MOMENT AGO?
STILL HERE--BUT YOU CANNOT SEE THEM!
WHAT WONDERFUL FINGERS... HOW THEY FLEX AND STRETCH!. ...HOW STRONG AND YET HOW DELICATE! WHEN DO I PAY YOU?
YOU HAVE ALREADY PAID ME! FAREWELL!

THE FOOL! HE THINKS THE HANDS BELONG TO HIM... BUT HE BELONGS TO THEM!

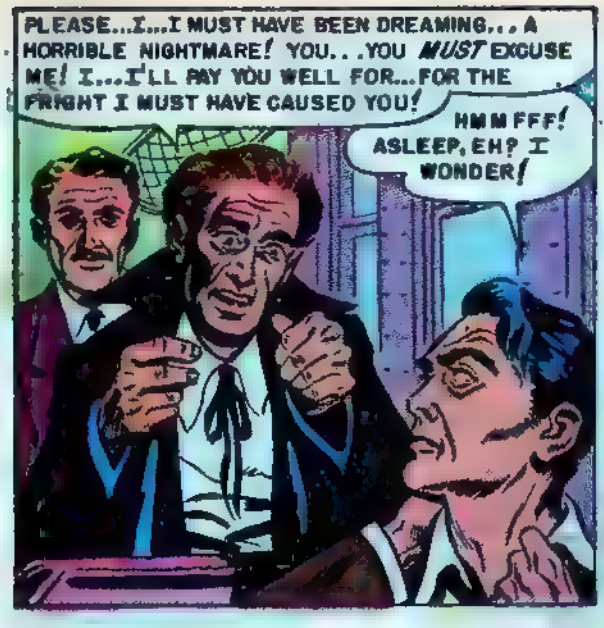
DULAN'S FIRST CONCERT AFTER A YEAR'S IDLENESS WAS THE SENSATION OF THE SEASON!
I'VE NEVER PLAYED BETTER!
SUCH STRANGE, STIRRING MUSIC.. IT..IT'S BEAUTIFUL... AND HORRIBLE!

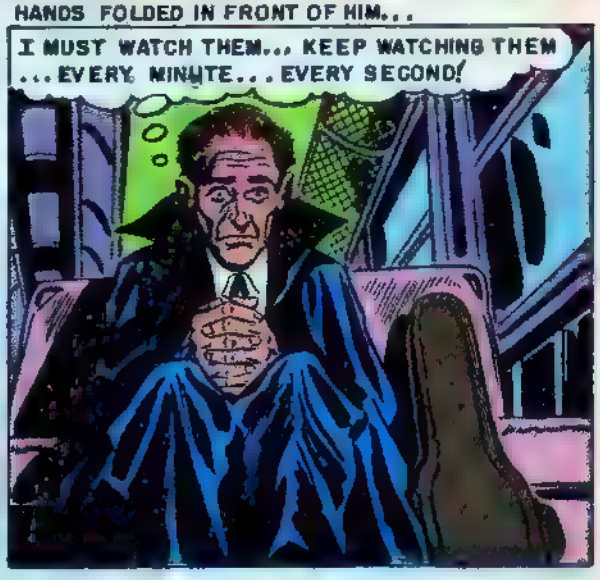
ON HIS WAY HOME, DULAN'S MIND WAS FILLED WITH THE APPLAUSE AND PRAISE EVOKED BY HIS PLAYING..
AHHH..IF NECROS ONLY KNEW HOW HAPPY HE'S MADE ME...WITH THESE NEW HANDS! I...I'LL BE THE GREATEST VIOLINIST OF THE AGE!


AND, WHILE DULAN WAS BUSY WITH HIS DREAMS, HIS HANDS WERE BUSY, TOO...
THE CRITICS HAVE NEVER BEEN SO ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT MY PLAYING! JUST WAIT TILL I LEARN EVERYTHING THESE HANDS CAN DO!

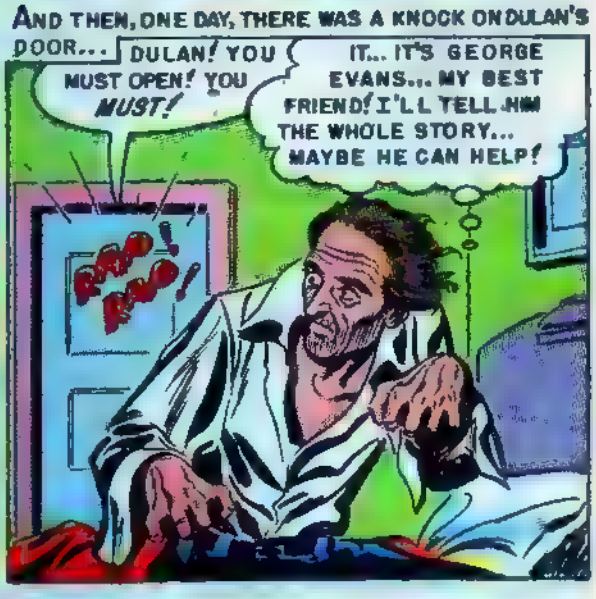

UNKNOWN TO HIM, WITH A CUNNING WILL OF THEIR OWN, THE HANDS REACHED OUT! THE FINGERS, LIKE TEN VICIOUS, WRITHING SERPENTS, CLUTCHED AND GRASPED ...AND SQUEEZED!

ARE YOU CRAZY? WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO?
WHAT? GOOD LORD! MY HANDS!
8


PLEASE...I...I MUST HAVE BEEN DREAMING... A HORRIBLE NIGHTMARE! YOU...YOU *MUST* EXCUSE ME! I...I'LL PAY YOU WELL FOR...FOR THE FRIGHT I MUST HAVE CAUSED YOU!
HMM FFF! ASLEEP, EH? I WONDER!


FOR THE REST OF THE TRIP, DULAN KEPT HIS HANDS FOLDED IN FRONT OF HIM...
I MUST WATCH THEM... KEEP WATCHING THEM ...EVERY MINUTE... EVERY SECOND!

HE GOT OFF AT THE FIRST STOP, REGISTERED IN A HOTEL, AND LOCKED HIMSELF IN HIS ROOM...
THEY'RE HORRIBLE...WICKED...WHENEVER I PASSED SOMEONE ON THE STREET, I FELT THEM ACHING TO CLAW AT THE WARM FLESH OF HIS THROAT!


AND THEN, ONE DAY, THERE WAS A KNOCK ON DULAN'S DOOR...
DULAN! YOU MUST OPEN! YOU *MUST!*
IT... IT'S GEORGE EVANS... MY BEST FRIEND! I'LL TELL HIM THE WHOLE STORY... MAYBE HE CAN HELP!
BANG! BANG!

ERIK! GOOD LORD, MAN! WHAT'S *WRONG* WITH YOU? YOU... YOU LOOK GHASTLY! I'VE BEEN SEARCHING EVERYWHERE FOR YOU! I FINALLY LOCATED...
COME IN... I'LL EXPLAIN EVERY-THING!

BUT AS SOON AS THE DOOR WAS SHUT...
ERIK! *WHAT ARE YOU DOING?*
GEORGE! I CAN'T HELP IT! THESE ACCURSED HANDS! I...I CAN'T CONTROL THEM! HEAVEN HELP ME! THEY...THEY'VE GROWN STRONGER THAN I AM!

MOMENTS LATER...
I...I MUST SEE NEGROS AT ONCE.. GET HIM TO TAKE THEM BACK... *HE MUST TAKE THEM BACK!*
YOU... YOU'VE KILLED HIM!

OF A CITY-WIDE SEARCH, DULAN SPED TO NECROS' GRIM MANSION...

BUT THERE WAS NO SIGN OF NECROS, AND ALL DULAN HEARD WAS THE HOLLOW ECHO OF HIS OWN VOICE AND A HINT OF HORRIBLE SPECTRAL LAUGHTER FROM THE DARK CORNERS OF THE ROOM...

AND AS DULAN LEFT...

LATER, AT THE STATION HOUSE...

I KNEW THAT GUY WAS LYING WHEN HE SAID HE WAS DULAK, THE VIOLINIST. THESE PRINTS SHOW PLAIN AS DAY THAT HE'S KURT LAJOS...WANTED FOR STRANGLING IN A DOZEN CITIES!
WH--WHAT? BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! YOU SURE YOU GOT HIS PRINTS RIGHT?

YEH...SURE! I DOUBLE CHECKED! WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTHING MUCH... EXCEPT THAT LAJOS WAS TRIED, CONVICTED AND ELECTROCUTED TEN YEARS AGO! I...I SAW HIM BURN MYSELF!

WAS IT HIS IMAGINATION, OR WAS DULAN'S CELL REALLY FILLED WITH THE ASHEN FIGURES OF THE LONG DEAD...MOCKING HIM UNMERCIFULLY?

The THING from the GRAVE!

If I hadn't decided to major in archeology none of this would have happened. But just as soon as I attended my first class and heard the handsome young professor explain how the history of mankind can be read in bits of bone and pottery dug out of the earth, I knew that this was the only subject I wanted to study.

Looking back, however, I have to admit that the fact that Professor Richard Jones was so attractive may have had something to do with my decision. And after I had attended his class only six times, he kept me after school, supposedly to discuss a special problem. But we both knew what the problem was, and it was only a matter of weeks before we were engaged.

It was Dick who told me about the old Indian tribe that had lived in our own hundreds of years ago.

"Might be a lot of interesting stuff waiting for someone to dig it up," he said. "The trouble is, though—the tribe lived on the piece of land that is now the graveyard! Can't very well go around digging up graves, can we?"

I looked at him in amazement. "My goodness, why not?" I asked. "It's all in the interests of science and human knowledge!"

He looked dubious. "Well," he said, "it's one thing to go digging in a bunch of foreign, deserted tombs, but it's another thing to start ripping up the graves in your own town's cemetery!"

Then I got the idea. "Richard!" I squealed. "Let's go there tonight! We'll only dig for a little while. Nobody will see us, an' think of what fun it would be if we found something really important!"

He tried to protest, but when I make up my mind to do something—well, he didn't struggle long....

The cemetery was dark. We moved well into the center of it, so that we would be completely out of sight of any curious passers-by. I lighted the lantern we had brought with us, and set it down on the newest gravestone. "Might as well start to dig right here, Richard," I told him.

Richard gave a resigned shrug and started to swing the pick up to his shoulder. Then suddenly he stopped. "Look what it says on the gravestone!" he said.

Who disturbs my sleeping dust
Will be changed to mortal dust!

I read it aloud. "Isn't that a queer epitaph," I exclaimed. "But you're not superstitious, are you Dick?" I noticed that he had grown pale, but he forced a grin and started to dig. It was when the point of the pick bit into the springy green sod for the second time that we noticed the smell. It was an odor which warned of death and age and mystic occurences. Richard stared at me in great wonderment, but before he could speak there was a clap like thunder, and a great crack appeared in the grave at our feet. Up from the crack, squeaking and beating their wings, flew two great bats. And following them out came — *IT!*

It flowed out of the grave like a cloud of smoke, yet I saw the bony, skull-like face and the long Indian-black hair that streamed around the scraggly neck. The monster's huge, trap-like hands closed around Richard's throat. I stared in amazed horror, and then I screamed hysterically and ran.... . . .

They're holding me on suspicion of murder. Several people saw us enter the graveyard together. Of course, they haven't been able to find the body. They keep trying to persuade me to show them where I hid the corpse after I murdered Richard. Of course, I tell them about the spirit that came out of the grave, but they send the psychiatrist in whenever I mention *that*. I even took them to the cemetery to show them where it happened. But, at the grave, the pick and the lantern were gone, and Richard was nowhere to be seen. And a pile of dust stood by the foot of the grave, and whenever the breeze blew it grew smaller and smaller.

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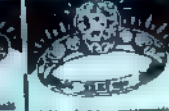

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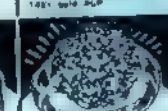

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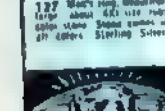
104. Ladies' Baguette dinner ring. Brilliant, simulated diamond, 6 marquisette and many smaller stones. Sterling Silver. Very rare gift to many others.

103. Men's massive red stone ring 1/20 10Kt gold filled or 1/30 10Kt RGP

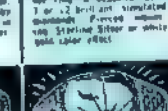
146. Ladies' lovely cocktail ring. 1 large, simulated diamond. 10 simulated rubies, 17 white stones. Yellow gold color effect

145. Men's massive solitaire's Baguette ring. Heavy Sterling Silver

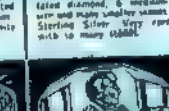
164. Men's beautiful solitaire cocktail design ring. Solid Sterling Silver or massive gold color effect. Also in ladies' size



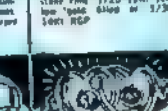
148. Men's large square cut simulated garnet ring. Yellow or white gold color effect



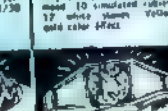
109. Men's stylish ring with sparkling, simulated diamond. Heavy yellow gold color effect mounting.



111. Men's Valued cameo ring 10Kt gold filled on solid Sterling Silver mount ing.

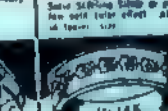


132. Sweetheart ring 3 simulated rubies on center twisted hearts. Yellow gold color effect

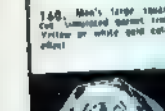


108. Men's massive ring. Large, 9-11 Kt. 2Kt. size simulated diamonds. Fine heavy mounting.

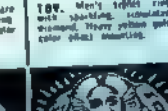
138. Men's Indian head ring. Massive gold color effect. Also in Silver size.



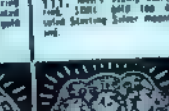
118. Ladies' simulated and modern wide wedding ring 1/20 10Kt yellow gold filled or 10Kt gold plate. Also heavy Sterling Silver



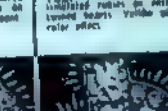
147. Massive designer ring. Elaborate well-made ring in heavy white gold color effect.



126. Men's cable type initial ring. Initial on each side 2 square-cut, simulated diamonds or red stones. Sterling Silver

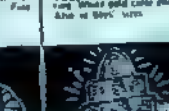


169. Ladies' engraved initial dinner ring. 3 large simulated diamonds and many smaller ones. Sterling Silver or white gold color effect

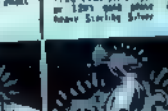


166. Ladies' engraved solitaire ring. 2 large brilliant simulated diamonds, 6 smaller stones. Sterling Silver or 1/30 10Kt gold

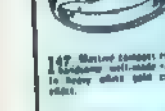
139. Ladies' or men's 10Kt ring mount. Yellow or white gold color effect



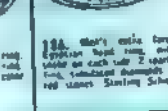
149. Ladies' dinner ring. Unusual design. Large brilliant simulated diamond, about 10 smaller stones. White gold color effect or Sterling Silver. Ring also comes in real silver design



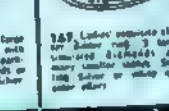
161. Ladies' dinner ring. Unusual pendant design 15 sparkling, simulated rubies, emeralds, sapphires. Yellow or white gold color effect



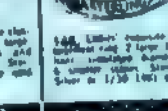
139. Men's solitaire ring. Brilliant, simulated 1Kt or 2Kt-size diamond. Sterling Silver



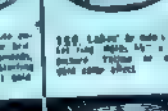
101. Beautiful baby ring. Solid 10Kt solid yellow gold mounting



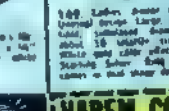
121. Men's heavy Sterling Silver signet ring. Monogram for engraving initials

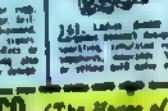


134. Ladies' Initial ring. Elegant, square cut, 3 simulated diamonds. Yellow gold color effect. Also with 3 white stones

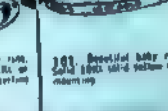


131. Men's ring. Simulated 1Kt ruby or cameo. 2 simulated diamonds. Yellow gold color effect. Also with 3 white stones

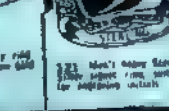




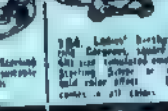
143. Men's U.S. Army insignia ring. Heavy Sterling Silver or yellow or white gold color effect



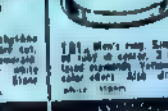
145. Men's U.S. Navy insignia ring. Heavy Sterling Silver or yellow or white gold color effect



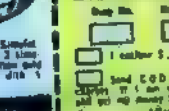
144. Men's U.S. Marine Corps insignia ring. Heavy Sterling Silver or yellow or white gold color effect



142. Men's U.S. Air Force insignia ring. Heavy Sterling Silver or yellow or white gold color effect



127. Men's massive ring. Large, brilliant, simulated diamond. 2 smaller square stones. White gold color effect.



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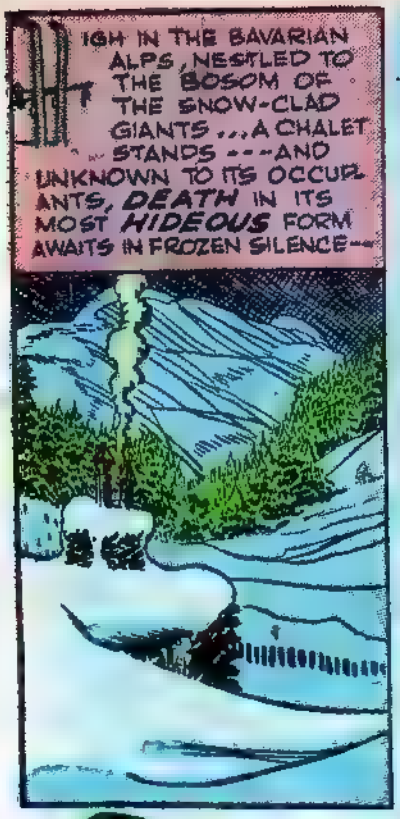
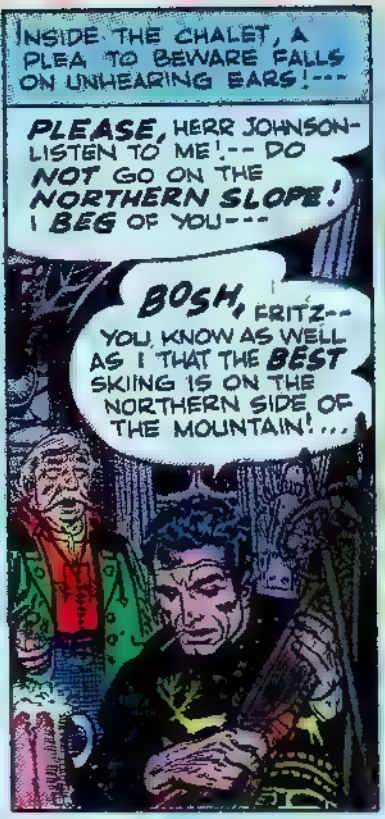
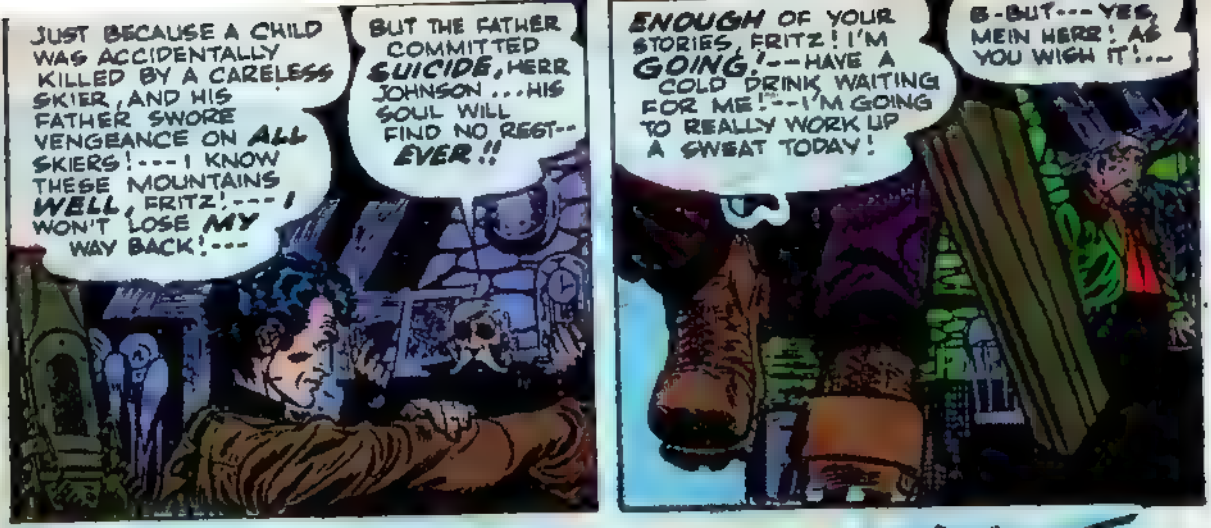
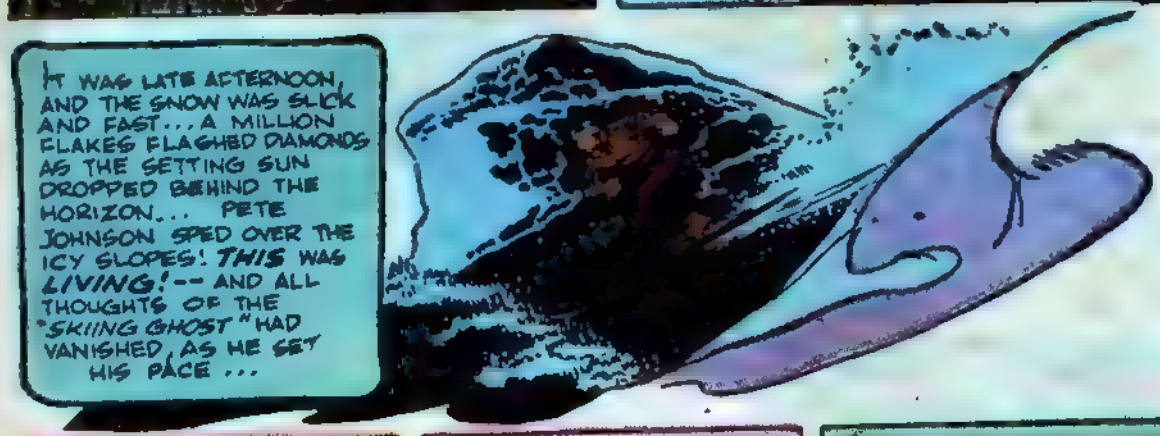

IGH IN THE BAVARIAN ALPS, NESTLED TO THE BOSOM OF THE SNOW-CLAD GIANTS ... A CHALET STANDS ---AND UNKNOWN TO ITS OCCUPANTS, DEATH IN ITS MOST HIDEOUS FORM AWAITS IN FROZEN SILENCE--


INSIDE THE CHALET, A PLEA TO BEWARE FALLS ON UNHEARING EARS!---
PLEASE, HERR JOHNSON-LISTEN TO ME!-- DO NOT GO ON THE NORTHERN SLOPE! I BEG OF YOU---
BOSH, FRITZ-- YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I THAT THE BEST SKIING IS ON THE NORTHERN SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN!...

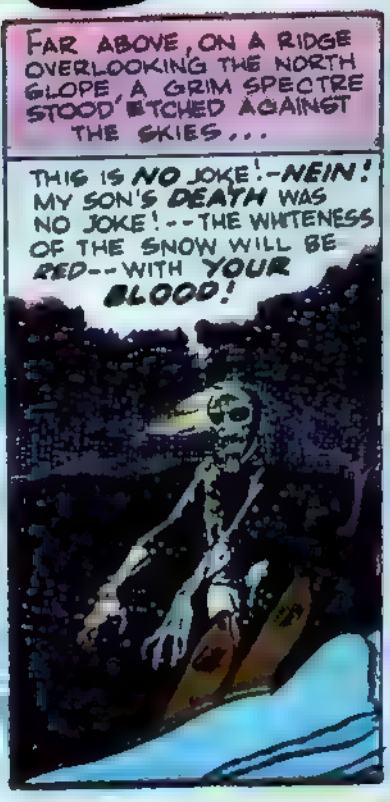
IF YOU GO THERE--IT WILL BE THE LAST TIME YOUR SKIS WILL TOUCH SNOW! MANY HAVE THOUGHT AS YOU--- NEVER TO RETURN!- IT IS WAITING---WAITING FOR THE UNWARY--- WAITING--AS--
1

DEATH ON SKIS!!

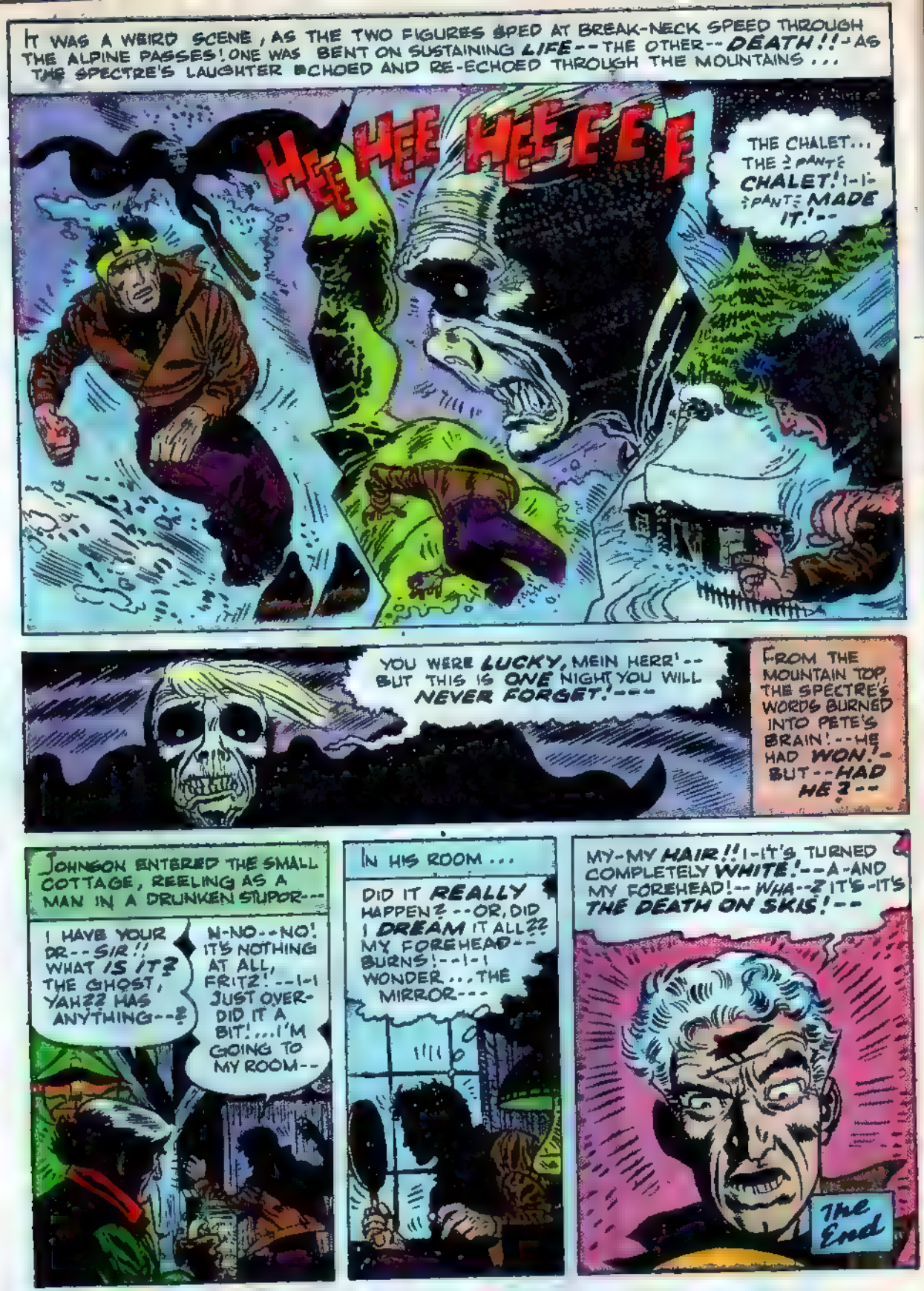

JUST BECAUSE A CHILD WAS ACCIDENTALLY KILLED BY A CARELESS SKIER, AND HIS FATHER SWORE VENGEANCE ON ALL SKIERS!--- I KNOW THESE MOUNTAINS WELL, FRITZ!--- I WON'T LOSE MY WAY BACK!---
BUT THE FATHER COMMITTED SUICIDE, HERR JOHNSON ... HIS SOUL WILL FIND NO REST-- EVER!!
ENOUGH OF YOUR STORIES, FRITZ! I'M GOING!--HAVE A COLD DRINK WAITING FOR ME!---I'M GOING TO REALLY WORK UP A SWEAT TODAY!
B-BUT---YES, MEIN HERR! AS YOU WISH IT!...


IT WAS LATE AFTERNOON, AND THE SNOW WAS SLICK AND FAST... A MILLION FLAKES FLASHED DIAMONDS AS THE SETTING SUN DROPPED BEHIND THE HORIZON... PETE JOHNSON SPED OVER THE ICY SLOPES! THIS WAS LIVING!-- AND ALL THOUGHTS OF THE "SKIING GHOST" HAD VANISHED, AS HE SET HIS PACE ...

THE SUN WAS GONE ... AND THE SNOW SHONE A PALE BLUE--WHEN SUDDENLY---
BREATHE YOUR LAST, HERR JOHNSON!--
WHO'S THAT?-IS THAT YOU, FRITZ?--I-I'M NOT IN THE MOOD FOR JOKING!...


FAR ABOVE, ON A RIDGE OVERLOOKING THE NORTH SLOPE, A GRIM SPECTRE STOOD ETCHED AGAINST THE SKIES...
THIS IS NO JOKE!-NEIN! MY SON'S DEATH WAS NO JOKE!--THE WHITENESS OF THE SNOW WILL BE RED--WITH YOUR BLOOD!

FEAR SHOOK PETE JOHNSON INTO MOTION!-DEATH HAD CALLED TO HIM!... COULD HE ESCAPE ITS WRATH? AT LEAST HE WOULD TRY!...
HEE, HEE, HEE, HEE, HEE RUN, FOOL, RUN!-- SEE IF YOU CAN OUTRUN MY VENGEANCE!


IT WAS A WEIRD SCENE, AS THE TWO FIGURES SPED AT BREAK-NECK SPEED THROUGH THE ALPINE PASSES! ONE WAS BENT ON SUSTAINING LIFE--THE OTHER--DEATH!!--AS THE SPECTRE'S LAUGHTER ECHOED AND RE-ECHOED THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS...
HEE HEE HEE E E E
THE CHALET... THE ?PANT? CHALET!--I--?PANT? MADE IT!--
YOU WERE LUCKY, MEIN HERR!--BUT THIS IS ONE NIGHT YOU WILL NEVER FORGET!---
FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOP, THE SPECTRE'S WORDS BURNED INTO PETE'S BRAIN!--HE HAD WON!--BUT--HAD HE?--
JOHNSON ENTERED THE SMALL COTTAGE, REELING AS A MAN IN A DRUNKEN STUPOR--
I HAVE YOUR DR--SIR!! WHAT IS IT? THE GHOST, YAH?? HAS ANYTHING--?
N-NO--NO! IT'S NOTHING AT ALL, FRITZ!--I-I JUST OVER-DID IT A BIT!...I'M GOING TO MY ROOM--
IN HIS ROOM...
DID IT REALLY HAPPEN?--OR, DID I DREAM IT ALL?? MY FOREHEAD--BURNS!--I-I WONDER...THE MIRROR---
MY-MY HAIR!! I-IT'S TURNED COMPLETELY WHITE!--A-AND MY FOREHEAD!--WHA--? IT'S-IT'S THE DEATH ON SKIS!--
The End

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You get all these items—you don't need anything else. Plenty of Magic grass seeds . . . Magic soil. Lovely flower seeds . . . Practical, attractive container . . . Bright colored metal butterflies. Little Dutch boy and girl . . . American Flag . . . Parasol that opens and closes . . . simulated rocks. Cute ceramic dog . . . Many other exciting features.

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☐ Send C. O. D. I'll pay postman $1 plus a few cents postage.

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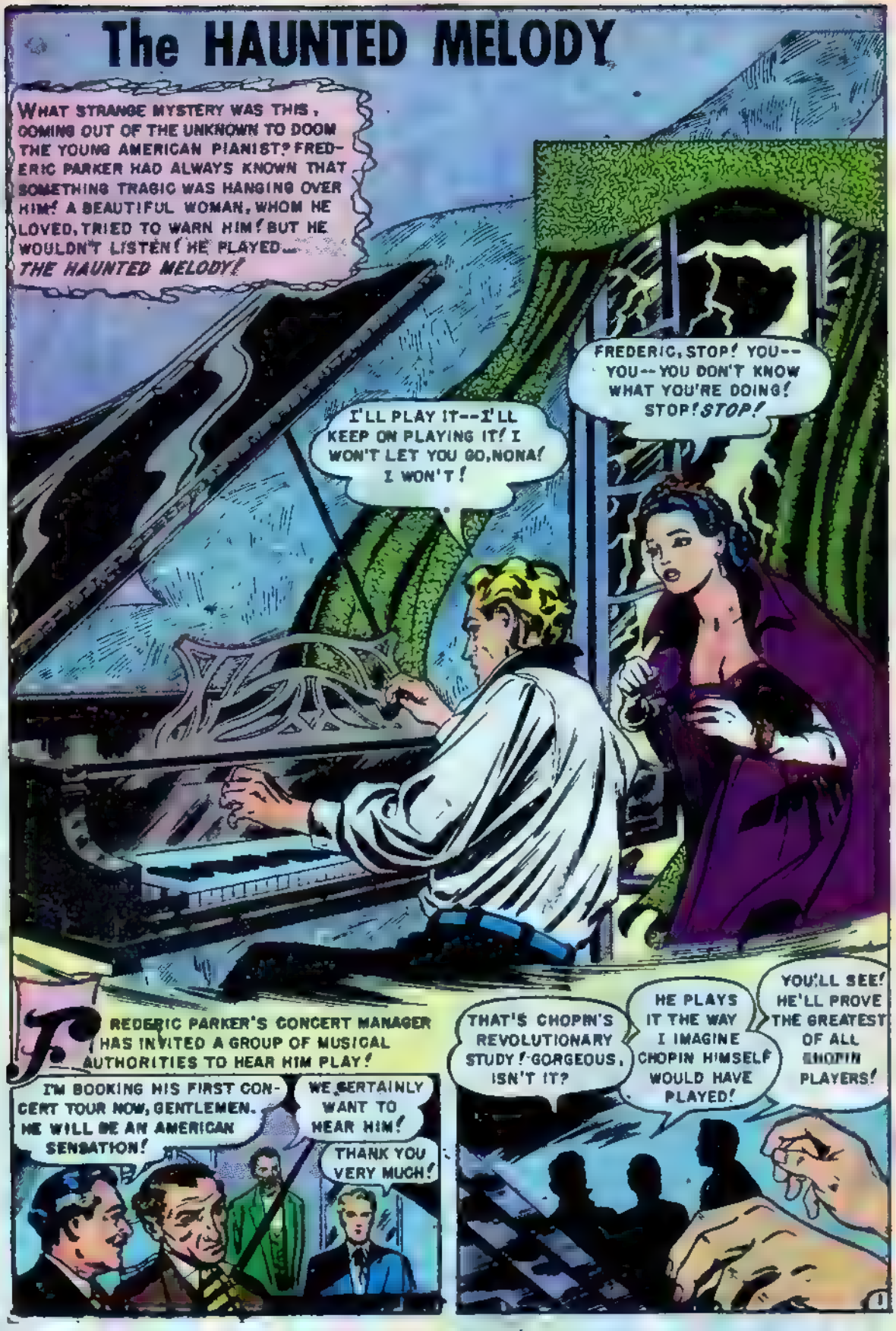
The HAUNTED MELODY


WHAT STRANGE MYSTERY WAS THIS, COMING OUT OF THE UNKNOWN TO DOOM THE YOUNG AMERICAN PIANIST? FREDERIC PARKER HAD ALWAYS KNOWN THAT SOMETHING TRAGIC WAS HANGING OVER HIM! A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, WHOM HE LOVED, TRIED TO WARN HIM! BUT HE WOULDN'T LISTEN! HE PLAYED... THE HAUNTED MELODY!
I'LL PLAY IT--I'LL KEEP ON PLAYING IT! I WON'T LET YOU GO, NONA! I WON'T!
FREDERIC, STOP! YOU--YOU--YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING! STOP! STOP!
FREDERIC PARKER'S CONCERT MANAGER HAS INVITED A GROUP OF MUSICAL AUTHORITIES TO HEAR HIM PLAY!
I'M BOOKING HIS FIRST CONCERT TOUR NOW, GENTLEMEN. HE WILL BE AN AMERICAN SENSATION!
WE CERTAINLY WANT TO HEAR HIM!
THANK YOU VERY MUCH!
THAT'S CHOPIN'S REVOLUTIONARY STUDY! GORGEOUS, ISN'T IT?
HE PLAYS IT THE WAY I IMAGINE CHOPIN HIMSELF WOULD HAVE PLAYED!
YOU'LL SEE! HE'LL PROVE THE GREATEST OF ALL CHOPIN PLAYERS!

AND WHEN YOUNG PARKER FINISHED...
BRAVO!... WONDERFUL!
WHAT TECHNIQUE, FIRE, IMAGINATION!
I TOLD YOU!
PLAY CHOPIN'S RAINDROP PRELUDE FOR US, WILL YOU, MR. PARKER? IT MAKES A WONDERFUL LITTLE ENCORE NUMBER!
NO! NO! NOT THAT! I-I CANNOT PLAY IT! I WON'T!
WHY SHOULD THE YOUNG PIANIST AVOID PLAYING THE SIMPLE, BEAUTIFUL LITTLE MELODY? WHEN THE VISITORS HAD GONE, AND HE WAS ALONE...
...I'LL PLAY IT NOW! I MUST! I--I WANT TO SEE HER NOW! I MUST SEE HER!...
CHOPIN'S RAINDROP! A LITTLE SONG OF LOVE... AND WITH IT, THE ROAR OF A STORM... THE BEATING, POUNDING OF WAVES... AND THE RAIN DROPPING DOWN... ALWAYS THE TERRIBLE, INSISTENT DROPPING OF THE RAIN! AND, AS PARKER PLAYED...
...THERE SHE IS! OH, NONA--NONA, DEAR!
FOR MONTHS, NOW, THE LITTLE MELODY HAD EVOKED THIS VISION FOR PARKER! HE CALLED HER NONA! AND LIKE PYGMALION, THE SCULPTOR WHO FELL IN LOVE WITH HIS STATUE OF A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN, SO PARKER HAD COME TO LOVE THIS VISION!
OH, NONA, DEAR--SOMEWHERE YOU MUST EXIST!... IF--IF ONLY I COULD FIND YOU!...
PARKER KNEW, OF COURSE, THE TRAGIC STORY OF HOW CHOPIN HAD COME TO COMPOSE THE LITTLE PRELUDE! THERE HAD BEEN A WOMAN WHOM CHOPIN HAD LOVED DEARLY, AND ONE NIGHT HE HAD HAD A TERRIBLE DREAM OF HER... HE DREAMED THAT THERE WAS A WILD STORM, AND...
OH, MY DARLING--WHERE ARE YOU? WHERE ARE YOU?

AND THEN HE DREAMED THAT HE HAD FOUND HER!

DEAD! DEAD! OH MY DARLING...

JUST A NIGHTMARE! BUT FOR DAYS THE MEMORY OF IT MADE THE YOUNG COMPOSER SHUDDER! AND...

...UGH! THAT TERRIBLE DREAM--CAN'T SEEM TO THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE! RAIN..RAIN DROPPING DOWN--IT WOULD MAKE A BEAUTIFUL PRELUDE! I'LL TRY IT!

...SO CHOPIN COMPOSED THE IMMORTAL LITTLE PRELUDE WHICH HAS COME TO BE KNOWN AS THE "RAINDROP"! AND THIS DARK NIGHT, AS YOUNG PARKER PLAYS IT...

OH--SHE'S GOING! NONA, DEAR--DON'T GO!

OH--SHE'S GONE! THAT'S A BAD STORM! GUESS I BETTER CLOSE THAT WINDOW...

A KNOCK SOUNDED AT PARKER'S DOOR! AND WHEN HE OPENED IT...

WHY--WHY--COME IN, PLEASE!

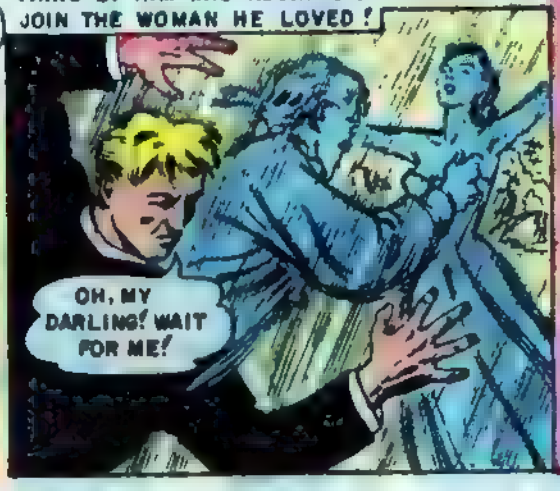
THANK YOU! I--I WAS JUST PASSING IN THIS TERRIBLE STORM--AND I HEARD YOU PLAYING! I--I LOVE THAT LITTLE MELODY!

IT WAS SO STRANGE HAVING HER HERE--THIS REALITY OF HIS FANCIES! SHE LOOKED SO LIKE THE VISION...HIS NONA!

YOUR CLOTHES ARE SOAKED! SIT HERE, THE WARMTH WILL DRY YOU!

THANK YOU! YOU'RE VERY KIND, FREDERIC!

AND ALTHOUGH HE FRANTICALLY TRIED TO FOLLOW HER, SUDDENLY IT WAS AS THOUGH HIS BODY HAD HIT AN INVISIBLE WALL! HE SEEMED TO FEEL HIMSELF FALLING--YET SOMETHING OF HIM WAS RUSHING ON... RUSHING TO JOIN THE WOMAN HE LOVED!



WAS IT THE ROAMING SPIRIT OF THE LONG DEAD CHOPIN, LIVING AGAIN IN THE REALITY OF FREDERIC PARKER? WAS IT REINCARNATION? AND HAD THE SPIRIT OF CHOPIN'S LOVED ONE APPEARED TO HIM AS A REALITY TO BRING HIM BACK TO HER? WHO SHALL SAY?

THE VILLAGERS FOUND YOUNG PARKER'S BODY THAT NEXT MORNING, AND...

THE HAUNTED CAVE

The legend of the haunted cave was an old one, and Roger Nelson knew it. Since he had been a boy he had heard about the horrible things which were supposed to have happened in the cavern. And now he and a group of seamen had a chance to buy the cave and turn it into a tourist attraction, and these shiftless natives were becoming hysterical because of a bit of silly superstition!

"You're acting like a bunch of children," he said when any of the group grouped around the conference table. "This is our chance to clean up a fortune! Now, I move it stay."

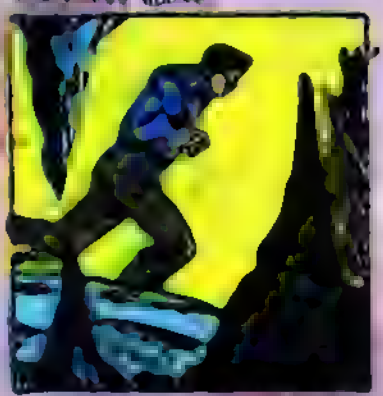
"But, sir, Roger, I don't know," said Sam Jenkins, scowling. "Seems to me that we may be better off if we have nothing to do with those creatures. I don't know," he hesitated, "how they speak, I don't want to anger them."

Roger slapped the table top with his palm. "I'll tell you what," he said leaping to his feet. "I'll spend a whole night in that cave, just to prove your fears. Then will you come in this thing with me?"

They looked at each other in shocked silence. Then old Sam spoke for the group. "I reckon we'd have to," he said.

• • •

It was black as black as only the inside of a cavern knows the night can be. Roger shivered in the breath of the underground river that flowed through the cave. The



sound was long and piercing and he shivered slightly. He had smashed in the lens of his flashlight while making his way into the interior of the cavern, but there was two candles in his knapsack and he lit both of them at the same time in an attempt to take the darkness out of the cave. He huddled over the small flame.

The wind whistled eerily into the mouth of the cavern and raised down the beach. The cave bats disturbed the darkness of their shelter from the stalactites on the ceiling; they circled wildly, squeaking eerily as they dipped lower and lower toward the floor of the cavern. Roger listened anxiously to the beating of hundreds of wings. One bat swooped even lower than the rest, and Roger screamed as something cold and furry brushed his cheek and soared up into the inky blackness above.

Another gust of wind shot through the cavern. This time it was even stronger than the first blast and both of the candles were knocked over and fell into the stream of water that rushed gurglingly by. Other sounds weird and horrible began to ring through the cave. The humming of a pair of bats sounded low and menacing from above. The scuttling claws of great cave crabs scraped along the stone floor, and the squealing of the noises made Roger grow cold with disease and loathing.

Now I see how all the rumors got started he thought. *Any one of these noises could make the place a haunted cavern. Heard together by an* [illegible] *person they might* [illegible] A slithering sound in the left caused him to leave a high, high like a water snake he thought. He pulled back the burning brand at his feet. The scuttling sound was approaching him, now it was only inches away. Suddenly he struck out at it with the brand. He felt the brand hard and something. Then the thing was nothing and thrashing around in agony. It touched his arm, a cold, clammy thing that felt as thick as a person's hair. He slashed it again and again. Then he broke out into a cold sweat, for he heard more rustling noises. Thinking that perhaps he could drive the snakes off with fire, he ignited his whole pack of matches. He held the flaming pack high—and the beast which was pulling itself out of the water was clearly illuminated. It was like a giant octopus, black and shiny in the light of the flame. Roger had just time enough for one startled shriek. Then the tentacles had wrapped around his windpipe and he was down, down into the stream of ice water. And in the cavern above, the bats, the cave and the gods continued to make frightened, eerie noises in the inky blackness.

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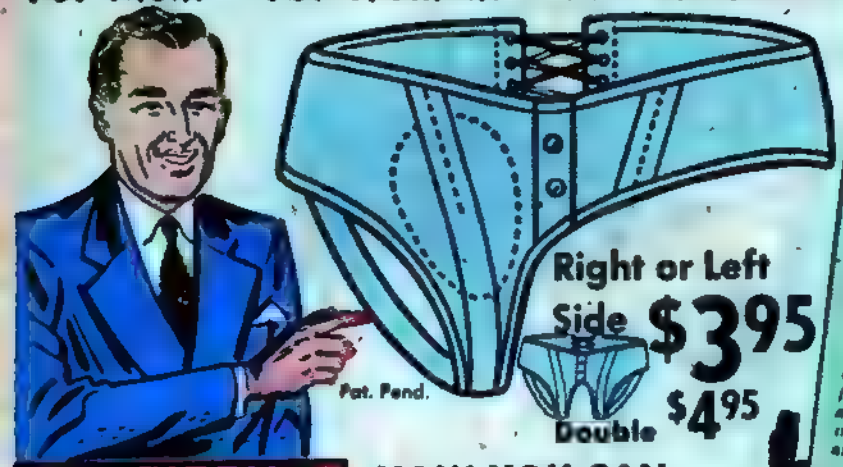

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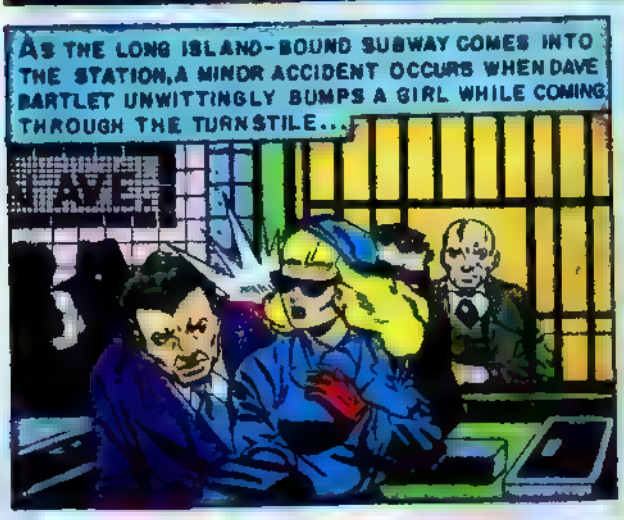
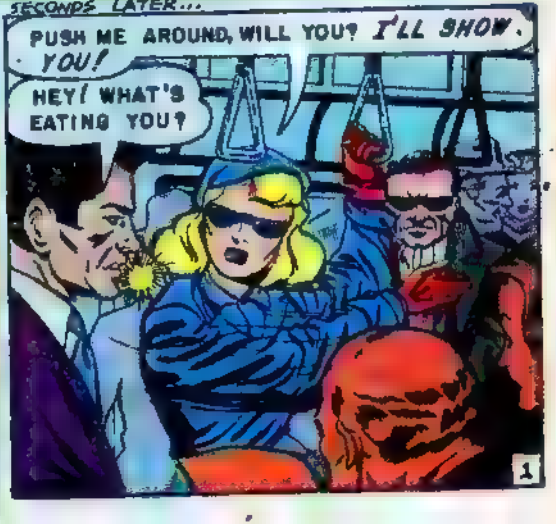
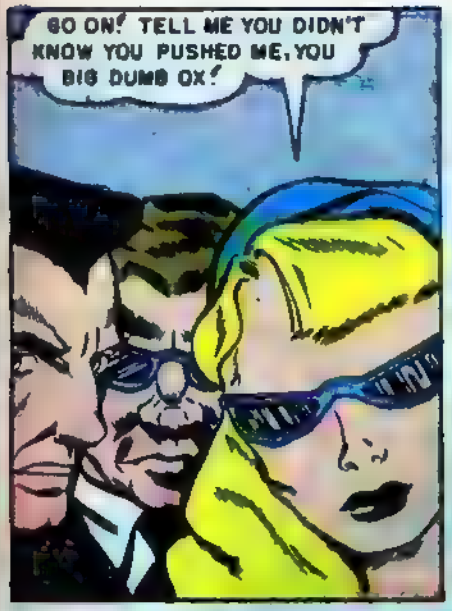
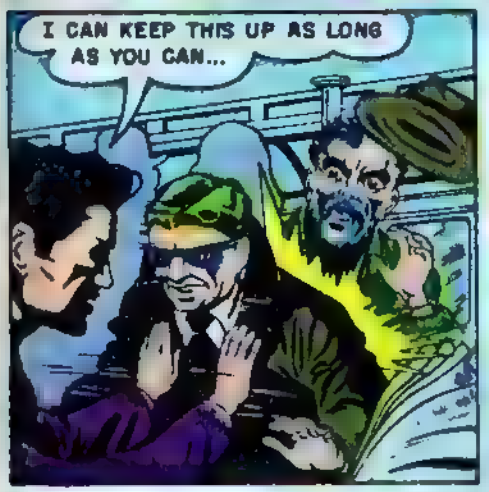
PRINCESS of the SUBWAY

WHEN THE SUBWAY TRAIN WAS DELAYED FOR TWENTY LONG MINUTES IN THE TUBE UNDER THE EAST RIVER, WHAT BECAME OF ALL THE PASSENGERS? ONLY DAVE BARTLET AND THE STRANGE GIRL COULD TELL, AFTER HE HAD FINALLY MANAGED TO BRING THE TRAIN INTO THE STATION...

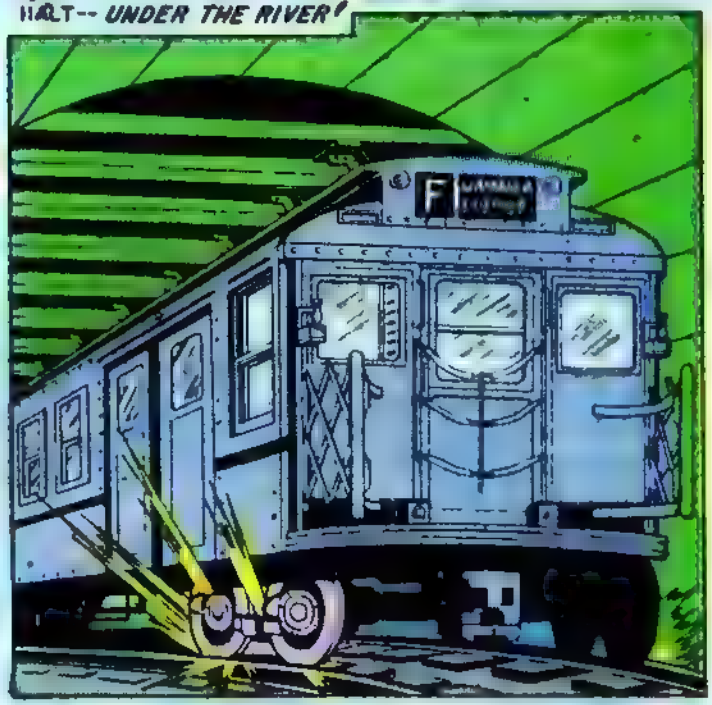

AS THE LONG ISLAND-BOUND SUBWAY COMES INTO THE STATION, A MINOR ACCIDENT OCCURS WHEN DAVE BARTLET UNWITTINGLY BUMPS A GIRL WHILE COMING THROUGH THE TURNSTILE...

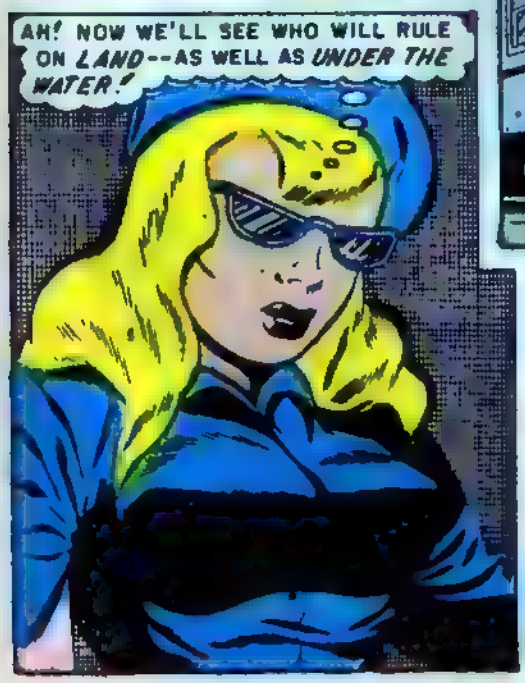






BUT AT THIS MOMENT, THE TRAIN GRINDS TO A SUDDEN HALT-- *UNDER THE RIVER!*





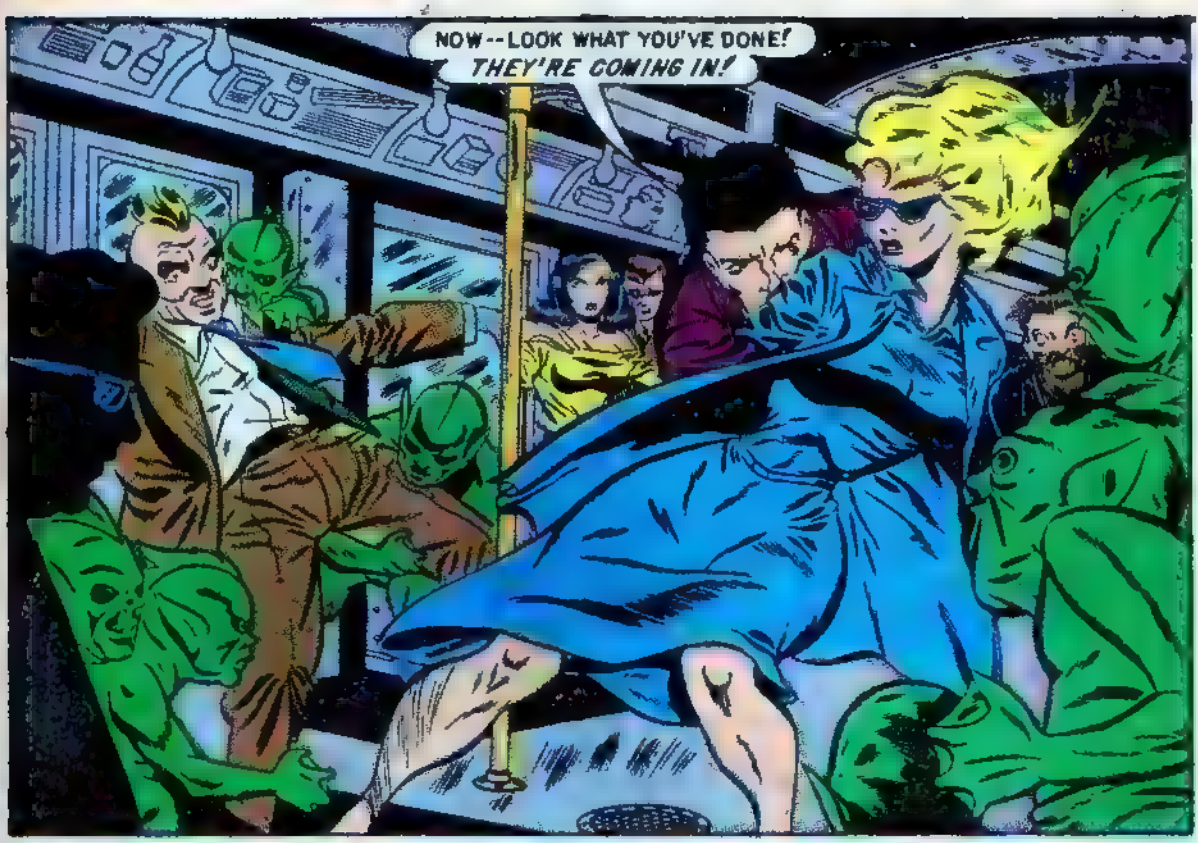
THE LIGHTS GO OUT AND THROW THE PASSENGERS INTO A PANIC!

WHAT HAPPENED?

STRIKE A LIGHT HERE, SOMEBODY!

I WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE! LET ME OUT!

GOOD LORD! WHAT A NIGHTMARE!
QUIET, EVERYBODY! STOP SHOVING, BEFORE SOMEONE IS BADLY HURT!
I HAVE A JOB TO DO! I'LL GO INTO THE NEXT CAR...
SORRY, LADY!
HEY! WHAT D'YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
AS PANIC SEIZES SOME OF THE PASSENGERS, BARTLET TAKES STRONG ACTION!
CAN'T TAKE CHANCES AT A TIME LIKE THIS, BUD!
GOOD LORD! IF THE WINDOWS ARE GIVING WAY, THOSE CREATURES WILL OVERPOWER US IN NO TIME!
CRASH!
JANGLE!
TINKLE!
LET ME THROUGH, FOLKS! I THINK THAT SOUND IS COMING FROM THE NEXT CAR...
CRASH
CRASH
JUST WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
3


NOW--LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE!
THEY'RE COMING IN!

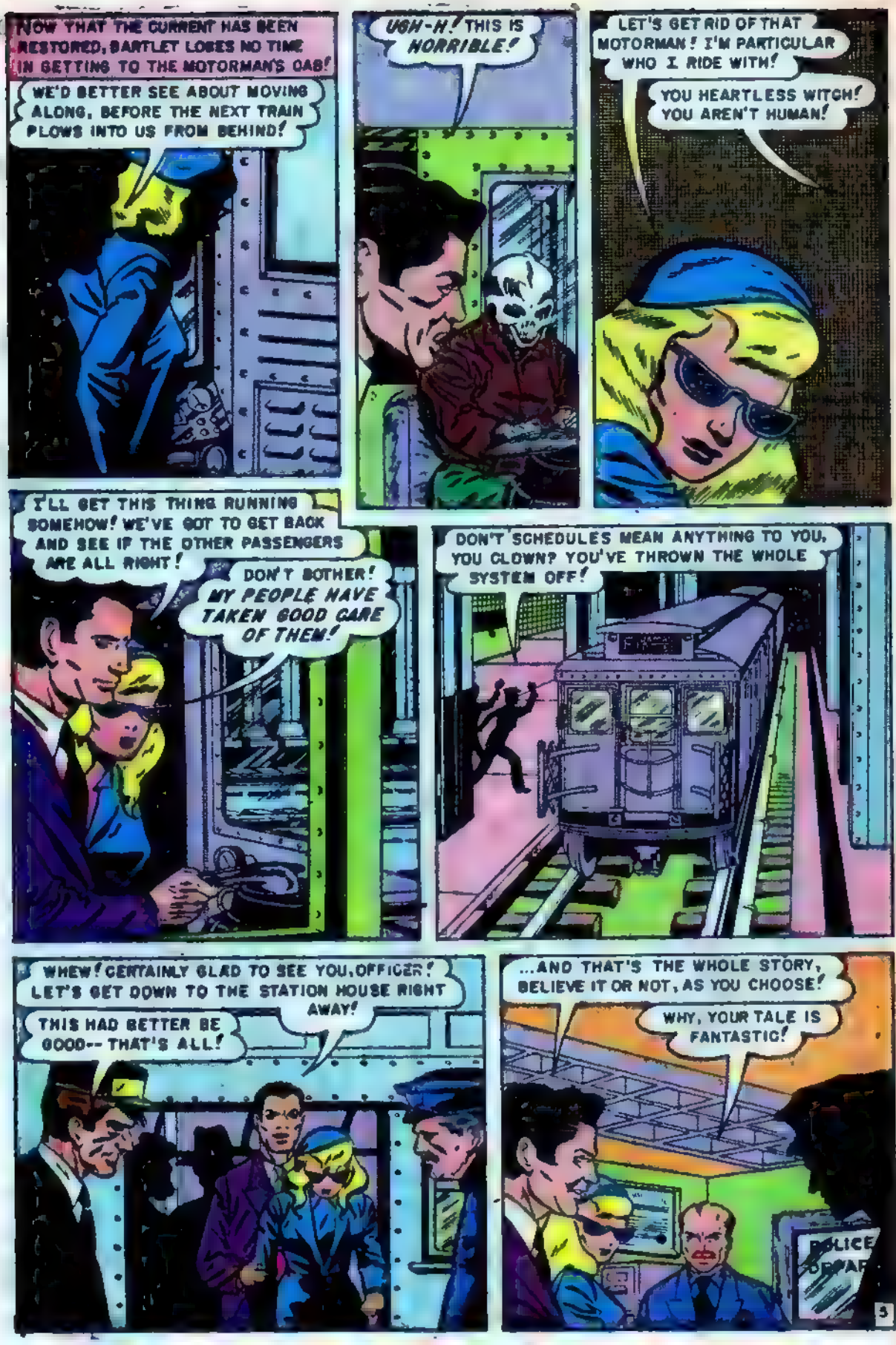
WELL, GO ON! LET HIM HAVE IT! WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR, STUPID?

WHAT A MESS! THE GUN WHEN OFF AS I GRAPPLED WITH THE CRAZY FOOL!

WHY DID YOU LET THESE CREATURES INTO THE TRAIN, MISS? ARE YOU MAD?
THEY ARE MY PEOPLE, AND I AM THEIR PRINCESS! AGES AGO WE WERE PUSHED INTO THE SEA AND FORCED TO DWELL THERE! NOW WE ARE MOVING BACK ONTO THE LAND, TO TAKE BY FORCE WHAT IS OURS!

SUDDENLY THE LIGHTS GO ON AGAIN!
CALL THEM OFF, DO YOU HEAR? IF YOU DON'T--I'LL KILL YOU!

THEY ARE LEAVING NOW!
GOOD LORD!


NOW THAT THE CURRENT HAS BEEN RESTORED, BARTLET LOSES NO TIME IN GETTING TO THE MOTORMAN'S CAB!
WE'D BETTER SEE ABOUT MOVING ALONG, BEFORE THE NEXT TRAIN PLOWS INTO US FROM BEHIND!
UGH-H! THIS IS HORRIBLE!
LET'S GET RID OF THAT MOTORMAN! I'M PARTICULAR WHO I RIDE WITH!
YOU HEARTLESS WITCH! YOU AREN'T HUMAN!
I'LL GET THIS THING RUNNING SOMEHOW! WE'VE GOT TO GET BACK AND SEE IF THE OTHER PASSENGERS ARE ALL RIGHT!
DON'T BOTHER! MY PEOPLE HAVE TAKEN GOOD CARE OF THEM!
DON'T SCHEDULES MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU, YOU CLOWN? YOU'VE THROWN THE WHOLE SYSTEM OFF!
WHEW! CERTAINLY GLAD TO SEE YOU, OFFICER! LET'S GET DOWN TO THE STATION HOUSE RIGHT AWAY!
THIS HAD BETTER BE GOOD-- THAT'S ALL!
...AND THAT'S THE WHOLE STORY, BELIEVE IT OR NOT, AS YOU CHOOSE!
WHY, YOUR TALE IS FANTASTIC!
POLICE
3

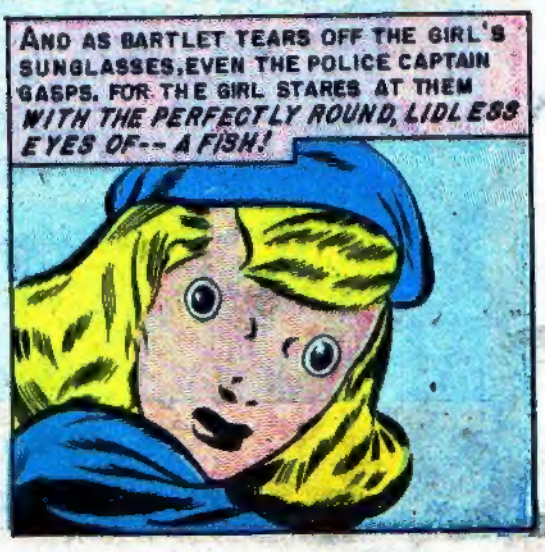
AND WHAT HAVE YOU TO SAY ABOUT ALL THIS, YOUNG LADY?
I REFUSE TO ANSWER WITHOUT BENEFIT OF COUNSEL!

AND SHORTLY...
WE'VE EXAMINED THE EAST RIVER TUBE, CAPTAIN. THERE'S A BREAK OR TWO, BUT NOTHING THAT CAN'T BE REPAIRED. NO SKELETONS-- NO FISH PEOPLE-- NOTHING!
THANK YOU, MEN!

WELL, BARTLET? THERE'S NO EVIDENCE TO BACK UP YOUR STORY...
CAPTAIN, I TELL YOU WE WERE ATTACKED IN THE TUBE BY A HORDE OF QUEER FISH PEOPLE WHO...

THIS WOMAN TOLD ME HERSELF THAT SHE IS THE PRINCESS OF THESE WATER CREATURES?
MISTER, I THINK YOU'RE SUFFERING FROM A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN!

TAKE THOSE THINGS OFF, WILL YOU? IT MAKES ME NERVOUS WHEN I CAN'T SEE YOUR EYES!


AND AS BARTLET TEARS OFF THE GIRL'S SUNGLASSES, EVEN THE POLICE CAPTAIN GASPS. FOR THE GIRL STARES AT THEM WITH THE PERFECTLY ROUND, LIDLESS EYES OF-- A FISH!

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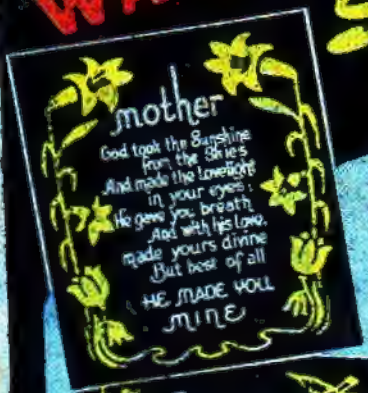
mother
God took the Sunshine from the Skies
And made the Loveliest in your eyes:
He gave you breath
And with his love,
made yours divine
But best of all
HE MADE YOU MINE

CHILD'S PRAYER
Now I Lay me down To Sleep
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
If I should Die before I Wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take

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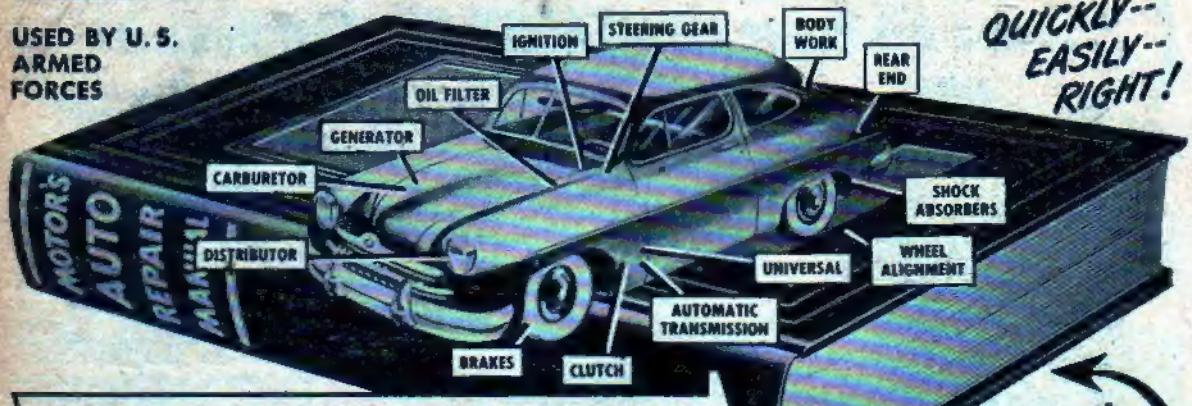

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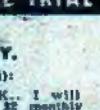

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(Check as many as you like)
- ☐ More Weight—Solid—in The Right Places
- ☐ Broader Chest and Shoulders
- ☐ More Powerful Arms and Grip
- ☐ Slimmer Waist and Hips
- ☐ Better Regularity, Digestion, Clearer Skin
- ☐ More Powerful Leg Muscles
- ☐ Better Sleep, More Energy

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